IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, in this application.

1. (previously presented) A process for determining the presence or absence of an antimicrobial residue in a sample of an egg which process comprises:

(i) contacting the sample of an egg wherein the egg is not coagulated with a test composition comprising a test microorganism suitable for being used in a method for determining the presence or absence of an antimicrobial residue;

(ii) inactivating a compound present in the uncoagulated egg sample that is capable of inhibiting growth of the test microorganism leading to false positive results absent said inactivating step by heating the contacted uncoagulated egg sample and test composition for a sufficient time interval to inactivate said compound without inactivating the antimicrobial residue to be detected; and followed by

(iii) incubating the contacted sample and test composition, to determine whether microbial growth occurs,

whereby the absence of microbial growth indicates the presence of at least one antimicrobial residue, and the presence of microbial growth indicates the absence of any antimicrobial residue.

2. (currently amended) The [[A]] process according to claim 1, wherein said heating is to a temperature of from 70°C to 100°C.

3. (currently amended) The [[A]] process according to claim 2, wherein said heating is to a temperature of from 75°C to 85°C.

4. (currently amended) The [[A]] process according to claim 1, wherein said heating is from 2 to 20 minutes.

5. (currently amended) The [[A]] process according to claim 4, wherein said heating is from 10 to 15 minutes.

6. (currently amended) The [[A]] process according to claim 1, wherein the test composition comprises the test microorganism, nutrients and one or more indicators of microbial growth present in an agar medium.

Claims 7-11 (canceled)

12. (currently amended) The process according to [[of]] claim 1, wherein said compound inhibiting microbial growth is lysozyme.

13. (currently amended) The process according to [[of]] claim 1, wherein the uncoagulated egg sample is homogenized prior to step (i).

14. (new) A process for determining presence or absence of an antimicrobial residue in a sample of an egg which process comprises:

(i) contacting the sample of an egg wherein the egg is not coagulated with a test composition comprising a test microorganism suitable for being used in a method for determining the presence or absence of an antimicrobial residue;

(ii) inactivating lysozyme present in the uncoagulated egg sample by heating the contacted uncoagulated egg sample and test composition for a sufficient time to inactivate said lysozyme without inactivating the antimicrobial residue to be detected; and

(iii) incubating the contacted sample and test composition to determine whether microbial growth occurs, wherein the absence of microbial growth indicates the presence of at least one antimicrobial residue and the presence of microbial growth indicates the absence of any antimicrobial residue.

15. (new) The process according to claim 14, wherein said heating is to a temperature of from 70°C to 100°C.

16. (new) The process according to claim 15, wherein said heating is to a temperature of from 75°C to 85°C.

17. (new) The process according to claim 14, wherein said heating is from 2 to 20 minutes.

18. (new) The process according to claim 17, wherein said heating is from 10 to 15 minutes.

19. (new) The process according to claim 14, wherein the test composition comprises the test microorganism, nutrients and one or more indicators of microbial growth present in an agar medium.

20. (new) The process according to claim 14, wherein the uncoagulated egg sample is homogenized prior to step (i).